2:Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4



7. Order all the burdens to be taken up when ye resolve to go on,
   And load the camels with everything that in the desert is needed and that is ready.
8. Keep the North Star on your right, so ye may not lose the way,
   And watch the seven stars of the Great Bear that are visible.
9. Greet also those who went away from me and deserted me,
   Sejf and Šwardi, the light of my eye, my healing.
10. Thus to them speak: "Your father swears that ye must return,
    And if ye come not to him, he swears that he must come to you.
11. If thou toilest because thou art poor or to gain treasures
    [Know that] wealth does not lengthen a short life;
12. The world thou livest in lasted forever neither for al-Âjde nor Sa'dûn,
    So it is best to spit on a world beyond which there is death."

A certain Šammari had two sons, Sejf and Šwardi, who went to the Ḥawrân to earn money. This is done every year by many people from the settlements of inner Arabia. They generally join the Rwala in their march to Syria, which takes place in the latter part of June. In the Ḥawrân they help as shepherds, reapers, or threshers, receive grain or clothing for their work; and return home again with the Rwala. Some stay abroad only two months, others several years. As the sons of our Šammari had been a long time away, their anxious father composed this poem, which was recited to me by Ṭrâd eben Saṭṭâm. When a chief sends out a mission he takes care that all ride camels of the same color. The prince of the Rwala sends out an embassy of this kind to the Ḥawrân every year, before he comes there himself. He sends letters and verbal messages to the elders of various settlements, to certain officials, and to his confidants, in order to assure himself of an undisturbed sojourn and of plenty of supplies. Our Šammari happened to see this party, consisting of ten youths on ten pale-gray she-camels, this color being the most favored in these animals. They resembled each other like sisters.